

HOME TREATMENT OF TYPHOMANIA.—Dr. P. M. Wise (*Buffalo Medical Journal*, April, 1883) says that: "It may be laid down as a pretty safe rule to follow, not, of course, without exception, that cases of acute delirious mania should be retained at home until it is safely conclusive that the attack is not a transient one, and that the patient will survive it. Marcé, estimates that one out of three or four survive the attack. In this country the mortality is certainly not as great, but it is large, and it is well to bear this in mind in making a prognosis that will largely influence the disposal of the patient."

THE INSANE AS WITNESSES.—The United States Supreme Court recently decided that: "A lunatic or person affected with insanity is admissible as a witness if he have sufficient understanding to apprehend the obligation of an oath and to be capable of giving a correct account of the matters which he has seen or heard in reference to the questions at issue; and whether he have that understanding is a question to be determined by the Court upon examination of the party himself and any competent witnesses who can speak to the nature and extent of his insanity."

"LIBERATION EPIDEMICS."—Referring to the recent efforts of some lawyers in New York to secure the discharge from an insane asylum of a rich inmate "whom a competent and impartial physician pronounced the most decided lunatic he had ever met," *Harper's Weekly* hopes that the Judge will not dismiss the case without finding out who employed the lawyers, and how much pay the latter are expecting to receive. "If it appears that they employed themselves, a judicial decision on the question whether it is professional for lawyers to beat up the dangerous wards of lunatic asylums in search of rich clients would be of general interest."

SYPHILIS AND PROGRESSIVE PARESIS.—C. Lange (*Hospitals Tidende*, May 23, 1883), after a careful examination of one of the Danish country asylums, concludes that syphilis is not as potent a cause of progressive paresis as has been claimed by Kjellberg, but that on the other hand the opinion, expressed by Lewin and others, that syphilis never produces progressive paresis, is erroneous.

J. G. KIERNAN, M.D.

d.—THERAPEUTICS OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

NERVE-STRETCHING by various methods continues to be widely

employed by physicians and surgeons. As its exact therapeutical value is still undetermined, we record below the recent contributions to this subject.

SUBCUTANEOUS NERVE-STRETCHING IN SCIATICA.—In a paper on this subject, read before the Medical and Chirurgical Society of Maryland at its last annual meeting, Dr. J. W. Chambers, from his own cases and others taken from the journals, draws the following conclusions: 1. That in obstinate cases of sciatic neuralgia the subcutaneous stretching of the sciatic nerve is highly satisfactory. 2. That from effects produced by the subcutaneous method, it is highly probable that all required force can be obtained. This he had also proved by experiments upon the dead subject. 3. The sciatic nerve could by this method be sufficiently stretched to produce anæsthesia. 4. That moderate elongation of a nerve impairs its sensory, and but little, if at all, its motor, functions. 5. That considerable force may be applied to a nerve trunk without seriously impairing its motor functions. 6. That it is not necessary or justifiable to employ more force than just enough to produce anæsthesia.

THE PSYCHICAL ELEMENT IN NERVE-STRETCHING.—Dr. J. G. Kiernan relates the history of a patient suffering from multiple cerebro-spinal sclerosis. During Dr. Kiernan's absence the patient went to a quack who etherized him, made a superficial incision over the clavicle, then assured him that the posterior cord of the brachial plexus had been stretched. The patient improved very much for six months, when the bad symptoms began to return. The improvement is referred, by the reporter, to the imagination. The powerful and direct effect upon the brain of etherization was doubtless the more potent factor.—*Journ. of Neurol. and Psychiat.*, Feb., 1883.

THE SUBJECT OF NERVE-STRETCHING is reviewed, and its results analyzed, by Dr. John Berg, who contributes nothing new.—*Hygeia*, March, 1883.

AN EXPERIMENTAL AND CLINICAL STUDY OF NERVE-STRETCHING has been made by R. Stintzig. He reports his results in a case of spastic spinal paralysis. At the end of four months, the cramps had disappeared, and the gait was much improved. He reports also four cases of tabes, with some improvement, and one case of paralysis agitans with no improvement. König, in reviewing Stintzig's report, refers to fifteen cases of neuralgia operated upon by himself, in most instances with excellent results.—*Centralbl. für Chirurgie*, June 2, 1883.